

NOXIOUS WEEDS ON DNRC LANDS

It is the intent of the Montana Association of Counties to support the active management of noxious weeds on DNRC lands in Montana, and to recommend cooperative agreements and funding sources to implement said management.

WHEREAS, noxious weeds are one of the greatest threats to Montana's native rangelands, forests, production acreages, water and water quality, wildlife forage, and habitat and other natural resources, and;

WHEREAS, the Montana Weed Management Plan states noxious weeds cost Montanans \$44 million in 2006 in direct management costs, lost production and other financial support for local and statewide programs, and;

WHEREAS, the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) manages 5.1 million acres in Montana, of which 460,000 acres are infested with one or more varieties of noxious weeds, and;

WHEREAS, the Montana Weed Management Plan shows the 2006 DNRC budget for noxious weed management was \$60,000, and also states DNRC should budget \$2,000,000 annually to reduce weed populations by 5% each year, and;

WHEREAS, most DNRC rangelands are open to, and used by, Montanans for hunting, fishing and other recreational benefits as well as grazing for livestock and wildlife.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Montana Association of Counties shall encourage the creation of funding sources to more adequately pay for controlling noxious weeds on DNRC (state) lands, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Montana Association of Counties supports cooperative management agreements, cost share programs, and other not yet defined methods to more adequately protect DNRC lands from the further invasion of noxious weeds.

SPONSOR: MACo Public Lands Committee

RECOMMENDATION: Do Pass

PRIORITY: High

REFERRED TO: Public Lands Committee

ADOPTED: MACo Annual Conference
September 26, 2007
Great Falls, Montana